

RECOGNIZING CHRISTOPHER
DODSON FOR ACHIEVING THE
RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 5, 2003

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Christopher Dodson, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 376, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Chris has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the years Chris has been involved with scouting, he has held numerous leadership positions, serving as Chaplain's Aide, Librarian, Patrol Leader, and Senior Patrol Leader. Chris is also a Brotherhood Member in the Order of the Arrow and a Tom-tom Beater in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say. Chris served on staff at H. Roe Bartle Scout Reservation during the summer of 2003, and has earned a total of 33 merit badges.

For his Eagle Scout project, Chris lead a group of Boy Scouts on a work project at the New Hope Retreat Center in Holt, Missouri. For the project, they built two fences around dumpsters, cleared land around the entrance to the camp, leveled out the area, and replanted flowers and shrubs.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Christopher Dodson for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

UNWELCOME TRUTHS

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 5, 2003

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned about the current human rights situation in North Korea and that nation's pursuit of a nuclear weapons program. The leadership of the North Korean government has proven to be volatile and unpredictable with a tight rein on a very closed, repressed society.

Thousands of American soldiers are stationed in South Korea to ease the tensions between North and South Korea.

The North Korean government is one of the worst abusers of human rights in the world, and 1.5 million North Koreans have already died of starvation. The international community must pressure North Korea to reach an agreement to end its quest for nuclear weapons. A country that suppresses its people and poses a threat to its neighbors cannot be allowed to possess nuclear weapons.

I submit for the RECORD a recent Wall Street Journal article detailing a proposal from Hwang Jang Yop, North Korea's highest-ranking defector. Hwang's proposal for peace and security focuses on regime change and a larger international focus on the human rights situation.

[From the Wall Street Journal, Oct. 28, 2003]

UNWELCOME TRUTHS

(By Melanie Kirkpatrick)

SEOUL—North Korea's highest-ranking defector arrived safely in Washington yesterday

despite North Korea's threat to "shoot his plane out of the sky" if he dared to visit the U.S.

This is the first trip to the U.S. for Hwang Jang Yop, the former head of North Korea's Workers Party and president of Kim Il Sung University who defected to the South in 1997. He brings with him a two-prong proposal for what he calls the peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula: regime change and greater international focus on the human-rights abuses of the North. In an interview here on the eve of his departure, Mr. Hwang said: "I want to emphasize the importance of eliminating the Kim Jong Il regime." How to do that? "The U.S. should put the issue of human rights at the top of its agenda in its dialogue" with North Korea.

Mr. Hwang is an unlikely champion of human rights in North Korea. Now 80 years old, he spent his career in the service of the brutal regime he now denounces. He was the North's ideologue-in-chief—founder and leading proponent of the "juche" ideology of self-reliance that Kim Il Sung, father of current leader Kim Jong Il, used to justify his totalitarian rule. The old Stalinist now says both Kims distorted his philosophy, which is really about "democracy."

One would think that the one place in the world where the campaign to free the North Korean people would be taken most seriously would be South Korea, where Mr. Hwang lived under virtual house arrest until recently. Think again.

Most Koreans are well informed about the brutal realities of life in the North but prefer to look the other way. It's much pleasanter to contemplate reunification fantasies such as the one portrayed in a recent hit movie about a cross-border romance between a South Korean woman and a North Korean soldier. Last week's chilling report on the North Korean gulags made it into some South Korean papers but wasn't front-page news. Students demonstrated against Mr. Hwang's U.S. visit last week, protesting his anti-North Korea message.

If the South Korean people seem indifferent to the plight of their brothers and sisters in the North, it's in large part because their political leaders remain silent. President Roh Moo Hyun was a human-rights lawyer before taking office earlier this year but human rights north of the DMZ is way down on his priority list. To his credit, Mr. Roh is allowing Mr. Hwang to visit the U.S.—something his predecessor, Kim Dae Jung (another human-rights activist who lost his voice when it came to the human-rights horrors in the North) refused to permit for fear of angering Kim Jong Il.

The official refusal to speak out about the human-rights abuses of Kim Jong Il's regime was on full display last week during an interview with the South's minister of unification, whom I met on the day the gulag report was released. For North Koreans, Minister Jeong Se Hyun said, "political freedom is a luxury, like pearls for a pig. The improvement of economic conditions for the North Korean people is the most important issue right now."

"Once the economic situation is improved," he said, then North Korea can focus on human rights. As for linking any deal with the North to progress on human rights: "I don't think it would be wise or effective if we try to negotiate the human rights condition or to pursue our policies with human rights as a condition," Mr. Jeong said. In other words: Whatever you do, don't annoy Kim Jong Il.

South Korea's constitution requires it to welcome any North Korean who wants to come to the South. Yet in the 50 years since the end of the Korean War, the South has accepted fewer than 3,000 refugees. Most have

come in the past two years, thanks in large part to the efforts of several private groups dedicated to helping North Koreans find refuge in the South.

The rescuers, many of whom are Christian, differ among themselves over how best to help. One faction prefers to work out of the public eye. Another faction pursues high-profile tactics such as helping asylum-seekers flood embassies in China. Its aim is to draw international attention to the plight of the quarter-million or more North Korean refugees hiding in China.

There's another aspect too—money. "I don't mean to sound mercenary," says Tim Peters, an American missionary here. "But in some respects running into a consulate in China is cost effective." Smuggling a refugee out through Mongolia or Vietnam costs \$1,000 to \$3,000 per person, he says. Mr. Peters adds that money also talks in North Korea's gulags. "It's easier to spring someone from a North Korean prison than from a Chinese prison," he says.

The high-profile tactics are taking their toll on rescuers' ability to help the North Korean refugees in China. Police security around embassies and consulates is tighter than ever. In the past five or six months, the highly effective Chinese intelligence service appears to have replaced provincial police in tracking down refugees. This is one reason, rescuers believe, for the failure of a plan earlier this year to smuggle out two boatloads of refugees from a northern Chinese port.

It is also becoming more treacherous along China's border with North Korea, where two million ethnic Koreans have long helped feed, house and hide those fleeing North Korea. Last month China sent 150,000 soldiers to replace the border guards, a measure viewed in the rescuer community as a crack-down on border crossings.

The four or five South Koreans in jail in China for helping refugees have received little help from their government. In contrast, Japan aggressively sought—and got—the release of two of its citizens arrested in China for helping refugees. It's a powerful deterrent for South Koreans who want to help to realize that their government won't come to their aid if they are arrested.

In Seoul, a few opposition politicians are finally beginning to turn their attention to human rights in the North. Park Jin, spokesman of the Grand National Party, which holds a majority in the National Assembly, faults the Roh government for "avoiding the issue." His party urges the government to do two things: press China to let the United Nations have access to the refugees and prepare South Korea for a possible flood of refugees. "We have an obligation to help," he says.

Another eloquent voice is Kim Suk Woo, former vice minister of unification and now in the powerful post of chief of staff to the speaker of the National Assembly. "As Koreans, we have a duty to support the refugees. As human beings we have a duty to support them," says Mr. Kim. "This kind of exodus could be a catalyst for the collapse of Kim Jong Il's regime."

The Roh administration "is careful not to provoke North Korea," he says. He is particularly scornful of Seoul's refusal last April to support a U.N. resolution condemning the North's human-rights abuses. And he criticizes the decision by the government of Kim Dae Jung—continued by the Roh government—to halt the South's air drops of radios into the North. All radios in North Korea must be registered with the authorities and permanently tuned to government stations. A South Korean radio is a listening post on freedom.

There's a debate in Seoul over Mr. Hwang's motives in calling attention to the North's